



March 7, 2013

Testimony of

DON DECESARE

President, Crossroads Communications, WLIS-AM and WMRD-AM
Past Chair, Connecticut Broadcasters Association

Before the

Energy and Technology Committee

concerning

S.B. NO. 1037 AND H.B. NO. 6360, ACTS CONCERNING IMPLEMENTING THE COMPREHENSIVE
ENERGY STRATEGY FOR CONNECTICUT

Co-Chair Duff, Co-Chair Reed, Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide the Connecticut Broadcasters Association's comments concerning the Comprehensive Energy Strategy for Connecticut (the CES). My name is Don DeCesare. I am Past Chair of the Association and the President and Licensee/Operator of WMRD-AM, Middletown and WLIS-AM, Old Saybrook. The Connecticut Broadcasters Association (CBA) membership comprises all of the FCC-licensed broadcast radio and television stations in Connecticut.

The "Executive Summary" of the CES states that the CES "covers all fuels **in all sectors** [*emphasis added*] ... to leverage private capital and market-based opportunities" Nonetheless, despite being significant consumers of electricity—without electricity broadcasting could not operate—as well as innovators and First Response Partners, the State's Broadcasters are not mentioned in the plan either as to their use of energy or their potential to be significant contributors to the State's long-term energy strategy. This oversight, should it not be rectified, may well diminish the Strategy's effectiveness and credibility.

Connecticut's Broadcasters have already contributed and would enthusiastically further contribute to the State's Comprehensive Energy Strategy:

As innovators, and as regular disseminators of the information within the CES as well as the process for adding to it – through news coverage and other public affairs opportunities.

90 South Park Street Willimantic, Connecticut 06226
860-633-5031 • Fax 860-456-5688
www.ctba.org

Broadcast Innovation

As the vital first step towards encouraging Broadcasters to innovate within the State's Comprehensive Energy Strategy, there should, within the Statue, be an expansion of the defined facilities in the definition of "microgrids" to include radio and television broadcast facilities. Well beyond the listed cell-phone towers, which offer only point to point communications, radio and television stations provide robust point-to-multipoint communications, which are always the most useful and efficient means of ensuring public awareness in time of crisis or emergency, as well as the more routine but nevertheless important needs for public awareness on a daily basis. Additionally, some radio and television stations (mine, for example) serve as host locations for cell phone towers. Truly, radio and television stations are "critical facilities like hospitals, public shelters, police and fire stations, water treatment plants, and telecommunications towers." (CES, page 101) Indeed, without the point-to-multipoint communications provided, at no cost to the State, by Broadcasters, crises and emergencies would be considerably more dangerous to the public. Information could not be efficiently distributed, and the ability of Public Officials to lead the public through a crisis would be disrupted. Indeed, it is inconceivable that emergencies within the State could be effectively managed without the invaluable contributions of Connecticut's Broadcast community. It is, therefore, in the State's best interest to include Broadcasters among the other "critical facilities" enumerated in the CES.

In those places where combining broadcast stations' microgrid capabilities with other "critical facilities" is not immediately practical, the CES should further encourage broadcasters to develop station-specific microgrids (by affording them access to the "Green Bank" (CEFIA) and the Commercial property (C-PACE) program). As just one example, doing so for my two stations could result not only in the uninterrupted, continued electrical service for the stations and the consequent ability for them to stay on the air and provide crucial emergency news and information, but also, in our cases, on-site alternative generation could power up to 2,500 and 1,500 nearby homes in Old Saybrook and Middletown, respectively. With more than one hundred radio and television stations in the State, the vast majority of which also have large acreages surrounding their transmitter sites, the possibilities for substantial additions to the State's alternative energy generation and distribution are huge.

Broadcast Communication

Furthermore, Broadcasters could, in various ways, engage with State Officials for "bully pulpit" promotion not only of the "Strategy" but of the deployment of alternative energy production under that Strategy. In partnership with State and local officials, Broadcasters could design new procedures for information dissemination during emergencies, particularly as the information relates to individual localities. For example, WMRD & WLIS have been in detailed conversations with Valley and Shoreline Emergency Management Directors with the goal of devising just such a plan, the first parts of which are already in place.

90 South Park Street Willimantic, Connecticut 06226
860-633-5031 • Fax 860-456-5688
www.ctba.org

Conclusion

In conclusion, the CES should not only recognize the significant past contributions of the State's Broadcasters but also assist them in becoming partners within the CES, both as energy consumers and as energy innovators, and, finally, take fuller advantage of the continued willingness of Connecticut's Broadcasters to provide public information and public service.

Thank you for your consideration and, we hope, positive response to our comments, respectfully submitted today.

90 South Park Street Willimantic, Connecticut 06226
860-633-5031 • Fax 860-456-5688
www.ctba.org